

Director's Message

The release of *California Water Plan Update 2013* (Update 2013) comes as severe drought leaves farms and communities across much of the state struggling to conserve and manage water supplies for basic needs. This drought is making news around the country and the world. Millions of Californians rank water as a top concern.

In crisis, there is opportunity. Even as we work to anticipate, mitigate, and document the effects of the current drought, we also must work with a longer view to build the relationships and policies that will help California survive the next inevitable drought — and flood — and safeguard the water supplies necessary to allow the state to thrive economically and ecologically.



Since 1957, the California Water Plan has served as the strategic plan for developing and managing the state's limited water resources. Update 2013 documents California's water management challenges and charts a strategic approach to moving forward, as with past updates, but it also echoes a call for action.

Update 2013 reflects the clear path Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. forged with his *California Water Action Plan*. Released in January 2014, the five-year plan outlines a set of actions that together bring reliability, restoration, and resilience to California water resources, even as the state's population is expected to grow from 38 million to 50 million by 2049.

Three related themes distinguish Update 2013 from Update 2009. The past five years have only reinforced the value of integrated water management, and this plan closely examines the practices and policies that allow water managers to combine flood management, environmental stewardship, and surface water and groundwater supply actions to deliver multiple benefits across a region. Fundamental to that integrated approach is better alignment in the management of data, planning, policy-making, and regulation across local, State, tribal, and federal governments. Put simply, we need to do a better job of coordinating to achieve our goals.

Finally, Update 2013 features an in-depth discussion of principles and strategies for creating stable, effective sources of financing for water resources, so that funding is not haphazard or inconsistent, but instead encourages investment in innovation and infrastructure.

Drought is but one of many challenges facing California water resource managers today. Update 2013 seeks to create a common awareness of our many challenges. All Californians have a stake and must come together — from a planning and policy-making standpoint — to achieve balanced and effective solutions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Mark W. Cowin". The signature is fluid and stylized.

Mark W. Cowin, *Director*